



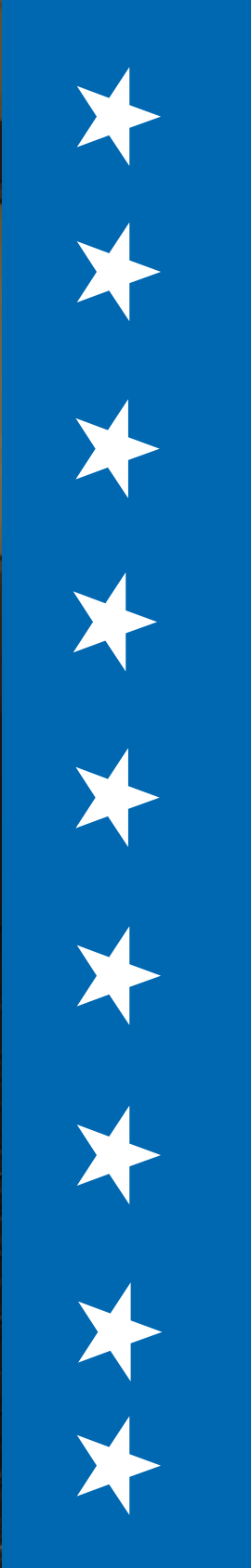
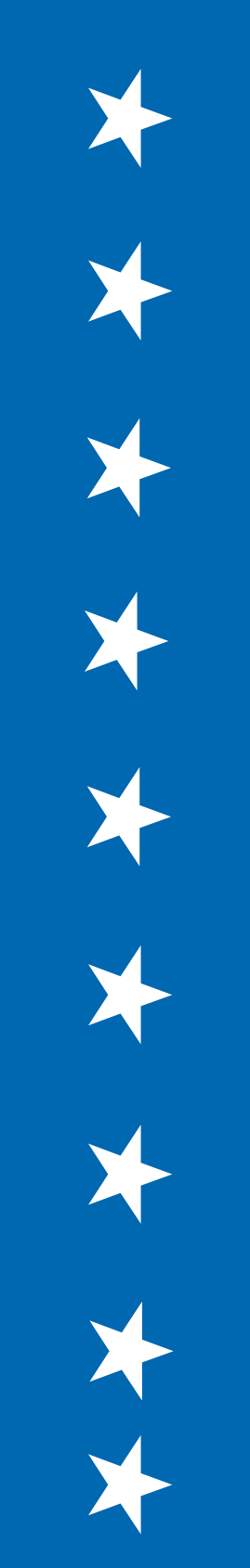
VOICE

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SPEAKING OUT FOR THE 8,000 WORKING MEN AND WOMEN WHO PROUDLY SERVE SUFFOLK COUNTY

Negotiations





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6	Daniel P. Losquadro (R)	854-1600	854-1603
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9	Ricardo Montano (D)	853-3700	853-3568
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13	Lynne C. Nowick (R)	854-3900	854-3903
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President's Message

Cheryl A. Felice



Negotiations March 26, 2010

Dear Mr. Jeff Tempera, Office of Labor Relations, Hauppauge:

The starting point for sensible and productive discussion over a long-term agreement, one which represents the best possible interests of the civilian workforce of Suffolk County government, must surely begin with trust.

The parameters of the New York State Taylor Law prohibited AME from entering into formal negotiations for several months during 2009 due to the CWA raid/decertification. However, during that time, AME's Negotiations Team met for serious discussions twelve times and has continued to meet regularly since January 1, 2010. AME has pledged our Union advocacy and Union protection and Union solidarity to our membership that we will enter into formal negotiations in the spirit of honesty and with mutual respect.

The duty to bargain in good faith is one of the most important and treasured obligations of collective bargaining. The Labor Management Relations Act (LMRA) requires that both union and management negotiate in good faith in a cooperative effort to voluntarily settle bargaining disputes. Good-faith bargaining essentially means that each party must demonstrate a sincere and honest intent to reach a labor agreement and, at the same time, be reasonable in their bargaining positions, tactics, and activities.

Although collective bargaining has been the forefront of the important professional relationship that exists between Suffolk County Labor Relations and the Suffolk County Association of Municipal Employees, it must be recognized that each collective bargaining agreement has often been negotiated by different representatives, each utilizing various negotiation methods. AME recognizes the value of mutual gain bargaining, which encourages mutual trust

and respect between the parties. Efforts must be made to consciously identify multiple alternatives to each negotiating problem that could meet both parties' key interests. Negotiators may, therefore, focus *less* on narrowing the gap between each party's position and *more* on expanding the numbers of mutually-satisfactory solutions.

Our Suffolk County workers are taxpayers. They own homes, have families, send their children to school here, are active within their own communities, and often retire right here in Suffolk County. For many, their entire lives begin and end here in Suffolk County. They pay taxes, invest in stocks and mutual funds, hold money in bank accounts, make retail purchases, send their kids off to college, make mortgage payments, pay off credit card debt and school loans, pay LIPA bills, fill their tanks with gasoline, and heat their homes with oil or natural gas. In summary: they represent the face of Suffolk County and the face of America. They want to help us get out of the current nationwide financial mess for all of the same reasons that all citizens want to succeed.

As President Franklin D. Roosevelt stated in a similarly difficult time, "*These unhappy times call for*

the building of plans...that build from the bottom up and not from the bottom down...that put their faith, once more, in the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid."

Our AME members are at the bottom of that "economic pyramid" of Suffolk County governmental structure:

- Our 911 operators, who work around the clock and all holidays to be the voice of reason for the county residents who call when they need help – are a Grade 13 – starting salary \$31,685.
- Our John J. Foley Skilled Nursing Facility's Certified Nurses Aides work around the clock and all holidays, caring for our neighbors, families, and friends – at a Grade 9 – starting salary \$27,170. An added note: the County Executive has continued to decrease JJF staff (the nursing staff is currently at a 25% downturn.) These nurse's aides have been denied the ability to take earned vacation time – *because of the lack of staff!*
- Social Services Examiner I's, who are the first faces applicants see when applying for public assistance at their initial personal interview – are a

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Grade 16 – starting salary \$34,661. An added note: applicants include: sexual predators, convicted rapists, drug addicts, domestic violence perpetrators, alleged gang members, and psychiatric patients who refuse to take their medication. These workers sit several inches from their clients.

- Blue Collar Custodial Workers I, who clean and maintain county buildings including bathrooms, floors, and take out garbage... not only for county workers, but for the public as well. There are some who work rotating shifts – at a Grade 8 – starting salary \$26,152. They are so understaffed that there is often one worker to clean two or three buildings in a single night!

In the County Executive's 2010 State of the County Address (February 3, 2010), he stated that with rising unemployment and higher foreclosures, more people were unable to pay their property taxes, resulting in what he determined was "over \$30 million short from our usual collections." His economically-feasible solution? The County Executive has continued to introduce Resolution upon Resolution seeking the closure of the John J. Foley Skilled Nursing Facility and tossing the lives of more than 260 AME workers into the growing pit of unemployment. The cause-and-effect result could be 260 more homes foreclosed and that much less paid to County taxes! AME has alternative solutions.

When the County Executive speaks of "shrinking county government," he is speaking of dollars and cents figures. He is not recognizing the negative effect such staff shortages continually have against a county population that pays taxes and expects to receive the services for which they pay. AME has alternative solutions.

When the County Executive speaks of smaller government vs. larger government, he is speaking of privatization—work being done by outside workers who are unfamiliar and untrained, unlike the existing county workforce. He is visualizing a new workforce that will work for less wages, no benefits, and no job security. He is describing a future of poverty and a diminishing working class. AME has alternative solutions.

Suffolk County has a workforce that is second to none. These men and women have continued to work harder to achieve the requirements of their jobs, albeit the continual staff decreasing with every county budget. The workers are already here. They have already been trained. Most were here long before the County Executive took office and will be here long after the County Executive is gone, as long as they are not laid off, downsized, privatized, or otherwise terminated. Many have continued in their personal pursuit of education to provide a better contribution to their county positions and to the residents of Suffolk County.

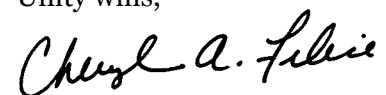
This is the workforce that the County Executive inherited when he took office. Rather than seek to do away with as many as he can, why not work with the workforce that exists—and get the job done *together*?

AME is not seeking to enter into negotiations of administering its own ideas on the successful operation of county government; but rather in the successful administration and operation of the county government's workers. Through the County Executive's entire 11-page State of the County speech, never once did he address the value, the contributions, the sacrifices made, and the work produced by his own civilian Suffolk County workforce—the members of AME. Many of these workers have worked here for thirty years and more, long before the County Executive got involved in his own political career; and they will be here long after the County Executive's 12 year term limit. These are the individuals who are out there on the front lines. They see the problems. They feel the results of insufficient staff. They have the ideas as to methods of improvement without throwing them into the unemployment pit. They have provided their important thoughts to AME, and AME will present many as alternative solutions.

As China is the sole nation which reveres its elderly for their wisdom, patience and grace, AME reveres its workers for their personal experience and knowledge, none of which has been recognized or asked for by the county administration. As Labor Relations enters into negotiations with a county agenda, AME enters into negotiations with an agenda of realism. We are acutely aware of the economy outside of Suffolk County, and we are acutely aware of the workforce which has managed to continually *do more with less*. AME has alternative solutions to best serve the backbone of the entire county government—the workers who provide the foundational structure for each and every taxpaying resident. Our County workers are taxpayers too. AME has alternative solutions.

In conclusion, we look forward to a mutual gain bargaining of cooperation, the sharing of pertinent information, and to avoiding tests of strength. AME seeks to promote interests rather than positions, and to practice openness during negotiations, where both side participate openly in problem solving and decision making. As we enter into a new phase of negotiations, we must all keep in mind the duty that is owed each and every Suffolk County resident from their county public servants. Our AME members continually strive to meet the goals set for them at the workplace. AME seeks that they be properly recognized.

Unity wins,



Cheryl A. Felice
President

AME General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, March 9, 2010, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

The AME Executive Board was present (except for Brian Kelly/excused – vacation)

Attendance Sheet will verify attendees

Pledge of Allegiance - Led by AME 4th Vice President Dot Kerrigan.

6:05 p.m.-President Cheryl A. Felice welcomed members. She reminded the members present of the last General Membership Meeting, which took place on December 1, 2009, when we were in the middle of the decertification raid against AME by CWA. By December 17th, CWA had withdrawn their intent to decertify against the AME workers. President Felice was pointing out how much has really happened since our last general meeting!

President Felice made the following important announcements:

- Negotiations have begun! (As per the Taylor Law, while we were under the CWA decertification threat, we were not permitted to meet for Negotiations.) We have been meeting here at AME. Formal negotiations with the County will begin on March 26, 2010.
- Please always remember: it is not about who you *like...or don't like...* what is the most important is that we are one Union! We must be "one!" We cannot appear as a *house divided* at Negotiations – because the County will then have an advantage.
- 2010 – the year of Levy's high political aspirations! She talked about the political power in the state (for instance, power over our NYS pensions.)
- There are two new members on the Legislature; we have been working closely with them on issues related to AME.
- Our #1 issue of importance is always to ward off **privatization!** And, this time, it is again the privatization of the John J. Foley Skilled Nursing Facility.
- **But for tonight, it will be about Negotiations—and we want to hear from you! What you want to see in the next contract, and what you do not want to see in the next Contract.**

MEMBERS SPOKE AT MICROPHONE:

1. **Leondra Bray (JJF Unit)** – She feels the threat to close JJ Foley is a racial issue, in that 40% of the workers there are minorities. She said no one else in the County workforce is at risk.

President Felice said this issue has been brought up by AME VP Dot Kerrigan at the Legislature, and pledged AME's continual fight to keep JJFSNF a

county facility. She also reminded Leondra and the JJF members that they, themselves, must also assume a responsibility to fight to keep their jobs. President Felice advised the JJF members that she offered several of the JJF members, some of their unit officers and others, full-time administrative leave back in 2007/2008 to come up and work at AME to help directly in the fight to save JJFSNF. Unfortunately, we asked to join in the responsibility to save Foley. Every JJF member asked refused to come to AME to help. President Felice pledged AME's 100% commitment for every AME member!

2. **Alicia Rustvold (JJF Unit 1st VP)** – Reported JJF are not getting their vacation requests, or holidays off, together with continual discipline when they use sick time. She cited several examples of job persecution.

President Felice advised her that grievances were filed against DOH for the vacation denials, and the parameters of that process are underway. She reminded Alicia that we all must work together to best help one of AME's many units – and to help 265 members out of AME's 7,000 active members. We cannot show management a *house divided* – and President Felice asked every JJF member present to pledge to work with their Union, not against it!

3. **Bonnie Pignataro (DSS)** – She had several questions about our health insurance, all of which had to do with personal filings and questions. She wanted to know when members could expect a new Empire book and was advised; and Bonnie felt Medicaid clients receive more benefits than County employees. Bonnie also requested more guidelines on pre-approvals, of which President Felice said she would consult further with EMHP.

President Felice provided what answers she could, and suggested that Bonnie call Victoria, at AME, to handle her personal questions with regard to pre-approval.

4. **Chris Destio (JJF Unit)**—complained that the AME Executive Board did not do enough for JJ Foley.

President Felice asked Chris why refused to help the fight to save Foley in the past, when asked to accept a full-time release position at AME to do so, but he declined. He refused to answer and he then left the building.

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5. **Arlene Ozdemir (JJF Unit)** – She advised AME that JJF Administration has been “breaking down the staff!” She said the unit needs to have better communication with AME to fight together.

President Felice assured her of AME’s support. She also thanked Arlene, again, for all of the wonderful care she had given to Cheryl’s elderly grandmother, who spent her last years at the JJ-FSNF. **President Felice pledged that AME support the John J. Foley Unit and its members!** At this time, she again reminded members that she offered administrative leave to many JJF members, including Nancy Manteiga, a former Executive Board Officer, (who was in the audience), but she also refused.

6. **Nancy Manteiga (JJF Unit)**—She immediately stood up and spoke from her seat – and stated that she did not believe AME would fight for JJ Foley.

President Felice told her the facts; that she, and all of the JJF Unit members, are working today at the County-run facility because of what this AME administration has done together with the Unit and the Suffolk County Legislature to keep the Facility in the budget.

7. **Matt Lazarus (SCCC White)** – had questions about Obama’s Health Care Reform—how and if it would affect us if passed.

President Felice explained that many aspects of the proposed health reform bill would most certainly negatively impact us, most importantly that had the President’s original bill been passed, the value of our insurance would have been taxed at a rate of 40%—for us to pay! For the explicit purpose of protecting the benefits of our AME members, President Felice and some of the Executive Board traveled to Washington, D.C. and spoke against taxing our previously negotiated benefits. She also explained why many private sector unions are strongly endorsing health care reform—because their members do not have the good plans our members enjoy, and it would be simply one less item they would have to bargain for.

8. **Dominick Ognio (JJF Unit)** – Questioned whether the County’s Mary Hibberd Law was appropriate to refer to when the Facility was being closed. He claimed there were loopholes in the law; however, he could not cite which parts of the law he was referring to. Dominick said he does not believe that a new owner of JJFSNF would kick out the residents.

President Felice assured him that AME’s consultant cited the parameters of the Mary Hibberd Law as the avenue that must be followed.

9. **Maria Prepisci (JJF Unit)**—She had ques-

tions about whether the Legislature is meeting on the JJF situation at the end of the month; and that there were rumors that the facility will be privatized.

President Felice advised Maria that there will always be rumors; however, AME has continually met with Legislators and, so far, believes they are supportive. She believes the County has succeeded in its mission of upsetting the JJF members—which their announcements have done. President Felice reminded everyone that it was AME who argued that the County administration was mismanaging the Facility all along. AME also reminded the Legislature that an audit of JJ Foley is still pending.

10. **Kenneth Williams (JJF Unit)**—He said he knows nothing about politics, but he’s attended demonstrations and meetings. He expects AME to help JJF! **President Felice listed some of the many ways in which AME has worked strongly to help JJF over the last few years. She also spoke of the many other departments and the issues they also face, such as staff shortages and purchasing their own supplies. She reminded the JJF Unit that they all must step forward and pledge their commitment to their Union. AME’s commitment on behalf of all members remains strong, just based on AME’s history!**

11. **Gene Gambale (Employee Services)**—She pointed out that today’s *Newsday* announced that if Levy becomes governor, he pledged to take away steps first!

President Felice explained that steps are part of the bargaining process and could not be simply removed unilaterally by any governor. She provided a brief history of how hard AME struggled to save our steps and protect them from future unilateral action by management. She also reminded the members that whoever is governor would have access to our NYS pensions. She, again, reminded members of the importance of PAC!

12. **Kevin Williams (MA BOD VP)** – Kevin introduced himself as a new member of the Negotiating Team. He provided assurance to the JJF Unit that Medicaid workers have now been mandated to *open JJF Medicaid cases first!* He then addressed the JJF members and said to them: **Have some faith!** He pointed out this is a political game—and we must be politically organized to get what we want! He feels that, with 7,000 members, we should have 3,000 demonstrating at the Denison Building when the Union calls! Kevin feels that AME members are too apathetic. He asked last night, *Where are our delegates tonight?* He

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strongly encouraged members to join the Ambassador's Committee—and *get involved in your Union!* He pointed out that we are negotiating to improve our Contract; however, when AME first decertified from CSEA – there was no Contract! The original leaders created what we now have. Before he sat down, Kevin announced that *even management employees benefit from AME!*

President Felice thanked Kevin for his Union passion and, at this time, asked the Unit Presidents and/or their representatives to stand and introduce themselves. Unfortunately, less than half of our Unit Presidents attended this meeting – so more than half of our members will have no knowledge of tonight's meeting from their elected unit representatives. *This is what needs to change! President Felice echoed Kevin's plea to get involved! Join the Ambassador's Committee! Bring this important information back to your unit's members!*

- 13. Peter Schramel (DOH)** – He wanted to know the County's financial condition, and he listed the past concessions he feels have been provided by AME members. He also wanted to know the number of County workers in 2010 when compared with 2009.

President Felice said the County will always "claim" fiscal emergencies. She advised him that she and the Executive Board will be meeting with County Treasurer Angie Carpenter to go over sales tax figures. Our budget process analysis is not yet completed. As for the number of County workers, the County average has remained the same—because Medicaid received federal funding and was able to hire a large amount of new workers. So, although JJJ Unit was reduced from 400 to 265, Medicaid Unit members spiked and the average number of members remained the same.

- 14. Joyce Olsen (Medicaid)** – Had many, many questions regarding our health benefits, all of which concerned her personal issues.

President Felice advised her on how to proceed most effectively and with necessary confidentiality.

- 15. Maria (DOH Social Worker)**—She sympathizes with the anxiety being experienced by JJJ workers. She stressed upon our AME members that we all must become active and call our legislators—on the value of JJFSNF.

- 16. Pat Rollings (JJJ Unit)**—Pat repeated the concerns of many JJJ workers this evening; she feels they are being beaten down by an unsympathetic management. But her issues went further: She said JJJ workers are not being supplied with adequate supplies for the patients! They run out

of adult diapers and skin cream. And the workers are continually denied vacations and any time off. ***She asked everyone tonight to please sign their petitions! She asked President Felice to send a letter of encouragement to the JJJ members!***

President Felice directed a question to DOH Administrator Rick Meyer, who was in attendance, regarding the lack of necessary supplies for our JJJ patients. She asked him to look into this serious matter. She also announced that a new DOH Commissioner is already on the job working; however, presently needing legislative approval.

- 17. Elaine Duryee (Sheriff Civilian Unit)**—she asked if the CWA issue was over, and she was advised it was over. She asked when retirees can expect COLA raises, which is five years after retirement.

- 18. Debra Angel (DSS)**—She is having difficulty with the health plan requiring prior approval for some personal issues.

President Felice advised her who to call at AME for this information, and she also provided follow up information as well.

- 19. Linda Ogno (JJJ President)** – thanked Dot Kerrigan, AME 4th Vice President and a JJJ Nurse, for all of her help. She addressed her Union brothers and sisters by reminding everyone that although JJJ is in the firing line, we are all in this *together*. She believes that Levy wants to destroy us all! She pledged that JJJ members will be at the next Legislative meeting.

- 20. Pete Mastando (JJJ)** – He said that he works out of title, both in maintenance and Material Control. He asked to, "*Spend some of that Union money on us!*"

- 21. Christine (DSS)** – She said that she will sign petitions for JJJ. Linda Ogno said to return them to her; address on top of petitions.

- 22. Bonnie Pignataro (DSS)** – had more questions about Medical Review and time restraints; she wants things in writing. She then wanted to know if Cheryl Felice was still Cochair of EMHP.

President Felice explained that she was no longer EMHP Cochair, having been unanimously elected by all ten unions for the past five years. President Felice declined the position early in December 2009 to devote her full energies to fighting the CWA decertification attempt. Mr. Jack Weishahn, from the Detective Investigators Association, is the new Cochair representing Labor.

President Felice thanked everyone for attending, and there being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

AME Negotiating Team--White Collar Bargaining Unit #2



Michael Finland
Police Civilian (WC)
Head Clerk

Michael Finland has been employed by Suffolk County government for the past 31 years. His primary assignment was working at the Community College which was followed by his tenure at the Civil Service Department. Subsequent to that position, he began working for the Police Department, a unit that he has remained in since 1981. He currently works at the 2nd Precinct in Huntington, New York, and is the highest ranking civilian staff member at that command.

Aside from his County employment, Michael is a licensed New York State Real Estate Salesperson, Real Estate Appraiser's Assistant, a Notary Public and he has been trained in the field of home inspection. He has 24 years of real estate experience and has presided over approximately 400 real estate closings. His area of expertise in law is the real estate field and he is also a member of the American Bankruptcy Institute. He has assisted clients with bankruptcy issues and proceedings. He is a member of FIABCI, an international federation of realtors which is based in Paris, France. This organization has special consultative status at the United Nations. In the past, he has served on the Political Action Committee of the Long Island Board of Realtors and on the Legal Assistance Committee as well.

Michael has attended Suffolk Community College and he has degrees in Communications-Media Arts, Computer Programming and Paralegal Studies. He holds a BA in English from St. Joseph's College and a juris doctor degree from Southern California University. He is now enrolled in a Masters in Law Program with a concentration in international law.

In 2002 Michael was voted "Notary of the Year" by the National Notary Association. He was cited for this award for a variety of reasons; amongst them his volunteer work as a notary and paralegal at Ground Zero where he assisted victims' family members with processing legal paperwork. He was chosen for this award from amongst a pool of 4.5 million candidates nationwide.

At the present time, Michael is an AME Unit Vice President for the Police Civilian Unit. He previously worked as a shop steward at Police Headquarters. He served this year as the Election Committee chairperson for the 2009 General Election cycle as well as working on the Negotiating Team. He previously served on the Political Action Committee of AME.



Kathleen Johnson
CSEB (WC)
Child Support Specialist I

Kathleen Johnson started her career with Suffolk County in 1996, serving County residents in her position at the Health Department.

Since 1999, Kathleen has been a Child Support Specialist I in the Child Support Enforcement Bureau (CSEB).

Kathleen has served her Unit's members in her role as delegate for the last several years, where she attended AME Conventions as a CSEB representative. In 2008, she was elected to the position of executive vice president. She has attended many Board of Directors' meetings as well as General Membership meetings and many AME events.

Kathleen is a member of AME's Community Outreach Committee, Action Committee, and was appointed to the Fire Safety Committee this year.

In appointing her to the Fire Safety Committee, President Felice recognized Kathleen's history as a long-time volunteer to her community as a Ladies Auxiliary member of the Mt. Sinai Fire Department, Assistant Chief for the Port Jefferson Volunteer Ambulance Corp., and as Commissioner of Port Jefferson Volunteer Ambulance Corp. Additionally, Kathleen is a Critical Care Emergency Medical Technician, a CPR instructor for the American Heart Association, and a CWI for the Suffolk County EMS Division.

She has an Associates degree in Early Childhood Education from Suffolk County Community College, a Bachelors degree in Psychology, and Masters degree in Public Policy from Stony Brook University.

Kathleen looks forward to being an integral part of AME's 2009 Negotiating Team, where she can utilize her education and skills to best help and represent her AME Union brothers and sisters.



AnneMarie Leonardi-Tracy
SCCC White
Head Clerk

AnneMarie Leonardi-Tracy is a 29-year employee at Suffolk Community College, who began her career at the College in 1980 in the Computer Center. After 24 years, she transferred to the Ammerman Campus Business Office in Selden, and currently holds the position of Head Clerk.

In her position as Head Clerk, she is responsible for assisting students with payment arrangements for their tuition, so as to continue their education and avoid going to collections. As assistant to the Director of the Ammerman Campus Business Office, she also oversees the Cashier's Office and Purchasing Department. Quite often, AnneMarie's negotiating skills come in handy when, in addition to assisting the students, she also acts as liaison between students and various departments at the College including Financial Aid, Counseling, Registration, Dean of Students, the Executive Vice President, and the College President's Office.

Outside of work and union activities, Anne Marie has been co-leader for her daughter's Girl Scout Troop, and manages a household as a single mom of a 15-year old daughter and 5-year old son. AnneMarie is also currently attending Suffolk Community College and hopes to graduate before her teenaged daughter!

AnneMarie's union experience dates back approximately 15 years. Elected initially as a delegate and unit board officer, she was then elected and currently holds the position of Executive Vice President and Acting Unit President of the SCCC White Collar Unit. She attends Board of Directors' meetings regularly, and brings back the important information to her Unit members. She is chairperson of the Unit Rebate and Restructure Committee, and a member of the Action Committee. She is proud to be a member of AME's 2009 Negotiating Team, and looks forward to serving her Union brothers and sisters in negotiating for a fair and equitable contract.

AME Negotiating Team--White Collar Bargaining Unit #2



Suzanne McBride
Police Emergency (WC)
Public Safety Dispatcher I

Suzanne McBride has been working for Suffolk County since 1997 as a Public Safety Dispatcher in the Police Department, where she handles calls to the County's 911 system together with dispatching Police patrol units. She handles an enormous amount of stress every minute she is at her job site!

After serving on her Unit's board, Suzanne was elected as the Police Emergency Unit President in 2008, and she has since attended Board of Directors' meetings regularly, as well as AME Conventions, actively and comprehensively representing her members and opening the lines of communication between AME and her Unit members.

As a wife and mother of three great kids, Suzanne knows first-hand the importance of a secure job, good health benefits, and a stable retirement plan. She has also volunteered as coach for her teenaged daughter's soccer team for four years, as well as assistant coach on both sons' soccer teams--both of which have taught her the importance of good team work.

Suzanne had previously worked for the IRS for ten years, and will be utilizing her skills in negotiating strategy and business communications in her role as a member of AME's 2009 Negotiating Team. She looks forward to representing the AME membership to insure that AME workers receive the compensation, job protection, and health benefits we all deserve for a job well done.



Joseph Stasys
Riverhead County Center
Map Drafter II

Joseph Stasys works as a Map Drafter II, where he maintains tax maps for the ten townships within Suffolk County.

Joe has been with the County as a loyal union member for 23 years. He volunteered to represent his coworkers as a shop steward the first year he was employed. In 1987, Joe ran for office in the Riverhead County Center Unit Elections, and has held the office of Unit President for the last 14 years.

Joe additionally serves AME and his membership on the Political Action Committee (PAC), Civil Service Review, and Action Committees, as well as being a regular AME event attendee. He has joined his AME Union brothers and sisters on many lobby bus trips to the state capitol in Albany to continue in the fight to maintain our wages and benefits. Additionally, you will always recognize Joe at the many AME General Membership meetings, union rallies, and important legislative meetings and hearings, making himself visible to be recognized as a strong representative of our AME membership.

Joe and his wife have three children, and he spends much of his free time coaching softball through his church's youth organization, as well as volunteering his time for his church.

As a long-time AME supporter, Joe looks forward to serving our AME membership on the 2009 AME Negotiating Team.



Linda Sulfaro
Riverhead County Center
Micrographics Technician

Linda has been an AME member since coming to the County Clerk's office in 1999, where she currently works as a Micrographics Technician.

She has served the Riverhead County Center Unit as its Vice President for several years and currently is its Executive Vice President and delegate. She also serves the AME membership as a member of the Action Committee, Budget Committee, and the AME Community Outreach/Member-ship Committee. A staunch AME supporter, Linda immediately volunteered to become an "AME Ambassador" when this newly-formed group organized following the recent CWA decertification threat! She takes pride in her union involvement and seeks to communicate the knowledge and information she gathers at AME back to the members.

Linda has been married to husband Tom, who works in the FRES Unit, for 27 years. They have three daughters and four grandchildren. Both Linda and Tom are active in their community, serving in the Shirley Community Ambulance since 1974. Linda has been the organization's Treasurer, 2nd and 1st Vice President, and is currently an EMT and life member. She has been an EMS Training Instructor and has volunteered for EMT and AEMT Classes, and is NYS certified.

Linda has pledged her support for a fair and equitable contract, and she hopes to serve her AME Union brothers and sisters well on the Negotiating Team.

(Continued on page 10)

AME Negotiating Team-- White Collar Bargaining Unit #2



Joan Travan
Medicaid (WC)
Community Service Aide

Joan Travan serves AME as the president of the Medicaid Unit. She has been a County employee for 12 years, and has been the unit president for the last 4 years. Prior to the creation of the Medicaid Unit, Joan also served the DSS Unit as an active shop steward.

Working in the Medicaid Unit of the Department of Social Services has exemplified to Joan the needs of the County employees performing the job to provide health care and services for the neediest of our society. She understands the complexities and the stress involved in being an Examiner because she sees it every day.

Joan grew up in Greenwich Village, New York, where after graduating high school, attended the Fashion Institute of Technology majoring in Fashion Design. But many classes and years later, Joan received her BA majoring in Business from New York State Empire College. One of Joan's English professors compared her writing style to the famous author, Edith Wharton, who also grew up in Greenwich Village. And in taking that compliment as the fact it was meant to be, Joan is the Editor of her own newspaper, **Joan's View**, published regularly throughout Suffolk County. She also writes a weekly column in the South Shore Press and North Shore Press newspapers.

Joan has spent her life volunteering her time to truly "make a difference." She was active in her children's schools and PTA when they were young, she's continually active in her community, and she is exceptionally active in politics. She has been on committees and been chair to committees, some of which have raised as much as \$30,000 for programs such as cultural arts. She started the Medford Chamber of Commerce with bank president Bill Cullen, was a founding member of the Brookhaven Arts & Humanities Council (and was instrumental in developing its financial and corporate structure.) She has served as vice president of the Patchogue-Medford Youth and Community Services Executive Board. For the past 10 years, Joan has served as president of the Medford Civic Association.

Joan is married and has three grown children and five beautiful grandchildren. As one can easily determine, Joan keeps herself active in issues and matters that make a difference, which is why AME is lucky to have her on our 2009 Negotiating Team. Joan, herself, has explained very simply how all of this plays into contract negotiations – that, through the years, she has perfected the art of the deal!



Kevin Williams
Medicaid
Social Services Examiner II

Kevin Williams began his union activism long before he came to AME. He actually embarked on his civil service career in 1997 as a Motor Vehicle Representative for New York State and was an active CSEA member.

On September 16, 2002, Kevin started working for Suffolk County as a Social Services Examiner I. When DSS and Medicaid split into two units in 2005, he stepped forward and welcomed the opportunity to serve as this new unit's Shop Steward. After staunchly serving his unit and its workers as a dedicated Shop Steward, Kevin became a write-in candidate as the Medicaid Unit's 2nd Vice President. He was honored that his coworkers held him in such high regard to put him on the Unit's Executive Board.

When asked why he got involved with AME, Kevin stated, "There is no point in complaining if you refuse to get involved!" And quoting the activist/author Eldridge Cleaver, Kevin believes, "You are either part of the solution...or you are part of the problem."

When Kevin was recently asked to become a member of AME's Negotiating Committee, he felt privileged to have such an opportunity to represent our AME members. Kevin acknowledges that we are the largest independent Union in New York State, and we have everything to gain by coming together and taking a unified stand! He believes that our success can be achieved only when all AME members demand that their voices be heard. He continually encourages his coworkers to join AME's Ambassador's Committee and to attend all of AME's General Meetings. In order to know what's going on, you have to get personally involved!

Kevin was recently promoted to SSE II, and points out that we have just entered our second year without a cost of living raise, and the sooner all of AME's members get involved with their union, the sooner we will acquire a good contract. As the father of two beautiful teenaged daughters, ages 18 and 15, together with a Huntington home, Kevin knows full well the ramifications of a brittle economy. He looks forward to Negotiations with energy and vigor and hopes the results will be a fair and equitable contract.

2010 Annual PEC Breakfast Albany February 2, 2010

On, February 2, 2010, an AME delegation of AME Secretary Frank Casiglia, AME 3rd Vice President Brian Kelly, and AME 4th Vice President Dorothy Kerrigan attended the Annual Public Employee Conference (PEC) Breakfast held in Albany. Among the notable speakers were Senate Majority Leader, John Sampson; House Speaker Sheldon Silver; Senator Diane Savino and New York State Controller Thomas DiNapoli. All spoke on the extreme economic difficulties facing our state and the ramifications of this fiscal crisis to the local Municipalities. All were in agreement that it will take the combined efforts of labor and management to weather this financial storm. Controller DiNapoli expounded upon his responsibilities as caretaker of our pension system and his commitment to preserving and protecting the future of our retirees. The AME delegation had the opportunity to meet with not only the numerous elected officials in attendance to discuss issues facing our membership, but also with the many leaders representing the varied labor unions comprising PEC. Our contingent was very well-received, and a large number of the union leaders present were quite vocal in voicing their displeasure with CWA Local 1180's (whose president was also in attendance) attempted raid on our Union. These same leaders saluted the fact that AME members stood strong and united to repel this unprovoked attack. It was quite a humbling experience to observe the respect garnered by AME among its peers, and the fact that so many diversified unions stood in support of our members throughout the ordeal. It only reinforces the fact that AME has grown to be a force recognized not only in Suffolk County, but throughout the entire State of New York.

AME Negotiating Team--Blue Collar Bargaining Unit #6



Cheryl Amuso
Crossing Guards (BC)
Crossing Guard

Cheryl Amuso, serves AME as the President of the Crossing Guards Unit, which represents up to 390 Crossing Guards.

She has been a Crossing Guard for 13 years, and Cheryl's current post is in the 7th Precinct in the Center Moriches School District, where she is a well-known presence of safety to all children and parents who have come to know her. She is married, and although her 2 children are grown, Cheryl considers all of the children she crosses everyday as part of her extended family!

Cheryl has been a member of the Crossing Guard Unit Executive Board since 1999, and became their president in December of 2006. She is a familiar face at AME Headquarters as a volunteer everyone can count on. Cheryl can be found holding up signs at Union rallies, sitting in the Legislative Hearing Room when there are Union issues being discussed by legislators, and boarding the bus to Albany to lobby for our members' continued wages and benefits. She attends every AME Picnic and has been a regular contributor at AME's Conventions.

Cheryl serves on the Action Committee and has served on AME's Uniform Committee. In that she was on AME's 2004 Negotiating Team, she looks forward to serving her Union brothers and sisters again on her second round of Union negotiations.



Robert Beck
DPW Buildings (BC)
Custodial Worker III

Robert Beck began his career with Suffolk County in 1986, when he was hired as a Custodial Worker I, working the night shift at the Suffolk County Police Department 2nd Precinct. Working at a Police site was a good fit, as Bob majored in Criminal Justice at Farmingdale College. Twenty-two years later, he is a supervisor in the Department of Public Works, overseeing the custodial staff in a multitude of County buildings throughout Western Suffolk.

Bob lives in Huntington and has three children. His son is 21 and his two daughters are ages 17. He prefers the night shift because he likes to make more time for the needs and schedules of his children. Bob has maintained a second job for 30 years in the film industry as a special effects assistant on some very well-known television shows as, "30 Rock" and Cablevision's "In Treatment," at the Silvercup Studios in Queens.

However, even with the busy schedule of two jobs and three teenagers, Bob felt it was time to take part in "making a difference." He already serves on the Action Committee, but felt that members needed to be educated on important issues and knew that someone had to take the lead. In 2008, Bob ran for DPW Blue Unit President and was elected. He attended his first AME Convention in November 2008, and discovered a wealth of information which he brought back to his unit members.

Bob looks forward to future Albany lobby trips with his AME Union brothers and sisters, and is ready to fight for the needs of the AME membership in his role on the 2009 Negotiating Team.



Donald Dailey
Parks
Maintenance Mechanic III

Don has been a member of AME since May 2007. Although new to Suffolk County's union service, he is no stranger to the labor movement and its struggles.

Don followed in his father's footsteps and became an Electrician and member of IBEW Local 25 (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers) where he served for more than twenty-five years. Don has acknowledged often that most of what he has gained in his life has been acquired through the efforts of organized labor. And it is for this strong realization that Don remains actively involved in unionism.

It didn't take Don long to volunteer on his Parks Unit Board, and he currently serves his Parks Unit members as their President. He is also Co-chair of the Blue Collar Committee and a member of AME's Action Committee. He was recently appointed to the Judicial Review Panel Ad-Hoc Committee, and he looks forward to his role in maintaining that AME's Constitution and Bylaws is adhered to as it is written.

In addition to serving AME's members through Unit service and committee membership, Don fully recognizes and understands the importance of effective political action and its impact upon our negotiations for a fair contract. For this important reason, Don also has volunteered for AME's PAC phone banks to help elect those candidates who pledge their union support.

Don has been with his wife for 22 years, and married for the last nine years. He is an avid sports fan and enjoys spending time watching NASCAR races, New York Giants football, and NY Islanders hockey. Don is also a strong animal lover and his family proudly provides a home to their two dogs and four cats. He also has some background in music and continues in his current hobby of learning to master the guitar.

As he serves as an alternate member of AME's Negotiating Team, Don pledges that he will represent our members to the best of his ability in AME's efforts to secure a fair and equitable contract.

AME Negotiating Team--Blue Collar Bargaining Unit #6



Salvatore Russo
DPW Sanitation Blue
Maintenance Mechanic IV

Sal Russo started working for Suffolk County in 1984 at the Bergen Point Waste Treatment Plant, which falls under the Department of Public Works Sanitation Blue Unit. He currently works as a Maintenance Mechanic IV and Electrician. Sal handles troubleshooting and various installations relating to complex control systems; and at the Bergen Point facility, maintains the public safety and the sanitary control and disposal of sewage waste treatment. He is “confined space certified,” and performs related electrical and maintenance work; Sal is also “on call” 24/7/365 days a year serving the residents of Suffolk County.

Sal has been actively involved in AME for approximately the last fifteen years, and has attended that many conventions, representing his unit and/or serving on various committees which have included: Blue Collar, Action, Budget, Election, and Convention Committees. Sal has accompanied his AME union brothers and sisters on Albany lobby trips, meeting and greeting our NYS legislators and lobbying for the benefit of our AME membership. In addition, Sal is no stranger to politics, having worked at the Suffolk County Board of Elections since 1990 where he coordinates and oversees the smooth running of elections held in Suffolk County.

Sal is married and has four sons. He has coached baseball for the last fifteen years with the Sachem Youth Association, and he coaches wrestling there for grades first through fifth. He is also an avid Boy Scout leader, and enjoys his time spent with his sons and their friends.

Sal currently serves as the DPW Sani-Blue Unit’s 1st Vice President, and as a member of the 2009 Negotiations Team. He feels the only way to really make a difference is to stand up and commit your time to a cause worth fighting for, and he believes in fighting for his AME Union brothers and sisters for a fair and equitable contract.



Michael Siena
DPW Buildings (BC)
Maintenance Mechanic III

Mike has been a member of AME since 2006; however, although relatively new to AME, he is by no means new to the solidarity theme of unionism.

Growing up in the fire rescue service, Mike discovered the importance of teaching others what you knew as a matter of survival. His own life’s lessons were learned on the fire ground as a Class A Firefighter and EMTD. He also worked as a Community Health Educator through Episcopal Health Services serving Brooklyn, Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk counties, recommending and developing community programs and lesson plans, many of which were conducive to professional diversity training. Mike worked for the Red Cross and taught First Aid CPR and their workplace safety programs as well.

It was during his years as a LIRR Assistant Conductor that Mike recognized the importance of union training. The LIRR management was faced with a well-trained union membership that was unified! He strongly believes that unity, combined with effective political action (PAC), is a powerful “one-two punch!”

Working initially as a building Maintenance Mechanic at the John J. Foley Skilled Nursing Facility and then transferred to the Suffolk County Jail at Yaphank, Mike has witnessed firsthand how acute our struggle with county management is. As Co-Chair of both the Blue Collar Committee and AME’s Ambassadors Program, and a strong member of the Action Committee, Mike wants all of the members of the AME blue collar units to learn and fully understand our AME contract together with the many benefits provided to them which have, over the years, been earned by them.

On a personal note, Mike has been married for “four glorious years” to his lovely bride, Jolene – who is also his strongest union supporter! Jolene is a high school English teacher here on Long Island and serves as an on-site union rep for her coworkers through the teacher’s union.

Mike’s signature statement is that there is no greater challenge or purpose than for the members of AME to put aside personal differences and unite! Mike hopes that his position on the AME Negotiating Team will be one of unity, pulling together our AME members as one and being victorious in our negotiations.



Brian Viggiano
Vector Control (BC)
Auto Equipment Operator

Brian Viggiano began his career with Suffolk County in 2000. He holds the title of Automotive Equipment Operator in the Vector Control Unit.

The Vector Control Unit is responsible for treating and impeding mosquito breeding in the hot summer months, and in doing so, also work during the cold winter months cleaning streams and rivers to maintain a moving flow of water. This unit continually maintains the environment by working with nature to rid our County of its mosquito population in the most environmentally green and safe methods possible.

Brian is also trained annually by Cornell Cooperative Extension, provided by the County, to maintain that his unit is kept abreast of environmental safety and potential hazards; and he has been licensed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in pesticide application.

Brian became active in his unit when he was elected as its 2nd Vice President in 2005, which followed with his election as Unit President in 2008. As Brian explains it, he introduced some new members who came with new ideas and new energy, to help the Vector Control Unit get more involved and bring the Union’s important communication back to their members.

He is single, and loves the outdoors. One of Brian’s favorite hobbies is fishing, and he has worked on commercial fishing boats. He has been involved with Ducks Unlimited and the Nature Conservancy, and has volunteered his time with these environment-friendly organizations. Brian hopes that his passion for the environment, together with his desire to maintain his union benefits, will serve him well as a member of AME’s 2009 Negotiations Team. He looks forward to the challenge!

About Our Current Contract

Even though our Contract expired on December 31, 2008, the NYS Taylor Law's **Triborough Doctrine** insures that the terms and conditions of employment remain "status quo," and in effect until a successor agreement is reached. This is especially significant when it comes to the payment of the contractual increments, also known as "the steps." For as long as the Contract is expired, Longevity payments will be awarded every April, and the **steps** will be awarded every July 1st to those employees who are still within the step system. While the Contract remains expired and before a new agreement is reached, items such as vacation accruals, uniform allowance, and longevity will continue to be paid under the expired Contract. The provisions that keep the Contract in place until Negotiations conclude is in exchange for prohibiting public employees from striking.

Negotiations---How We Begin

Everyone at one time or another bargained over



Michael Finland, Police Civilian and Frank S. Casiglia, AME Secretary pay careful attention as Tom Ryan, legal counsel of O'Dwyer & Bernstein go over some important issues of negotiation.

price when buying a car. You want to get the best deal without paying too much, while trying not to let the other side know too much about what you're willing to compromise on. The techniques of negotiations are a particularly tactful give-and-take process, one which requires patience and determination. The same situation exists for unions when they negotiate with management for a **Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)**, commonly known as the Contract. The only difference is that unlike



Pictured seated above: Kathleen Johnson, CSEB; Alice J. Peltz, AME Second Vice President; Linda Sulfaro, Riverhead County Center; Josephine Passantino, AME First Vice President; Brian Viggiano, Vector Control; and AnneMarie Leonardi-Tracy, SCCC White Collar Unit review and discuss members' ideas for bargaining as President and Negotiating Team Chair Cheryl A. Felice looks on.

buying a car we have just one dealership to negotiate with --the County.

Negotiations begin when the Union submits a list of demands, and the County submits a list of concessions or givebacks. The members of the AME Negotiating Team and the members of the Executive Board evaluate the respective requests in order to develop and accept the best overall deal for the membership of AME. However, a tremendous amount of research and development takes place before the process proceeds.

The Taylor Law

The Public Employees Fair Employment Act, commonly known as the Taylor Law is the labor relations statute which covers public employees in New York State. The Taylor Law requires public employers (in our case, the County) to negotiate and enter into agreements with public employee organizations (the Unions) regarding the terms and conditions of their employment. The Taylor Law also establishes *impasse procedures* for the resolution of contract or negotiation disputes, while prohibiting public employees from enacting a strike.

The **New York State Public Employment Relations Board (PERB)** is the independent agency, appointed by the State Governor and confirmed by the NYS Senate, to administer the Taylor Law. With regard to negotiations, when contract talks fail to bring about an agreement, *contract dispute resolution steps* within the Taylor Law take over. The first step is **mediation**. The County, the Union or both can request

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mediation assistance by filing a “**Declaration of Impasse**” with PERB. PERB appoints a mediator who acts as a liaison between the parties and seeks to secure a settlement by obtaining compromises from both sides.

If mediation fails, then **Fact-Finding** is the next step. Another liaison is appointed by PERB who may hold a hearing, seek testimony of witnesses, or attempt to resolve the matter through additional mediation. The Fact-Finder offers non-binding



Pictured Above: Cheryl A. Felice, AME President and Chair of the Negotiating Team Committee, explains some of the important mandatory bargaining subjects of Negotiations.

recommendations to the parties. If the report is not accepted, the next step for public employees in our category goes to a **Legislative Hearing**. The Fact-Finding Report, the Management Report, and the Union Report are all submitted to the **Legislature**. The Legislature may direct the parties to continue to negotiate or may impose a contract for no longer than one fiscal year. The expiring contract remains in effect during this entire process and can only be changed if and when the Union agrees to such changes.

Meetings with the County

The **Negotiating Team** will evaluate those demands requested by AME and the counter offers made by the County. Rounds of talks will take place before an agreement is reached. The details of the contractual offers are kept between the members of the Team and Executive Board. It is usually counter-productive to negotiate in the public and tends to give the opposition an unfair advantage which could exploit our membership. The **Team** must act in a manner which is in the best interest of our very diverse group.

Subjects of Bargaining

Under the Taylor Law, the County has a duty to negotiate. The County must bargain over Mandatory Subjects of Bargaining which include salaries and wages, salary schedules, shift differential, longevity pay, vacation and holiday leave, health insurance, including dental insurance, work hours and residency requirements. Non-Mandatory Subjects of Bargaining include, shift assignment, job security, filling vacancies and qualifications for appointment, promotion, classification, or job description. Once the terms are agreed to in writing, the parties sign off on the Tentative Agreement. The proposed agreement is then presented to our **Board of Directors** before a vote for **Contract Ratification** is held. At this point, every member in good standing may cast a vote either in favor of or against the Contract. Agency Shop members **do not** vote on the Contract. Now may be a good time to insure that your membership in AME is up-to-date.

Legislative Approval

Once the membership has successfully ratified the Contract, it then goes before the **Suffolk County Legislature** for financial approval. The Legislature



Pictured Above: Tom Ryan, O'Dwyer & Bernstien, clarifies a question raised by Kathleen Johnson, CSEB (Right), as Mike Finland (Police Civilian) and Helen Wrobel (O'Dwyer & Bernstien) listen.

cannot debate the contents of the agreement, only the financial impact of the Contract. Committee Hearings are held where AME lobbies the 18 individual legislators for their support. At that time, we may ask our membership to appear at the Legislature to show support for our Contract and to demonstrate

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Pictured Left to Right: Kevin Williams, Medicaid Unit; Alice J. Peltz, AME Second Vice President; Dorothy Kerrigan, AME Fourth Vice President; and Brian Kelly, AME Third Vice President listen intently as the Negotiating Team discuss the differences between mandatory bargaining subjects and those subjects which fall under voluntary bargaining.

our “strength in numbers.” This has proven to be a very effective tool in the past. For your convenience, we have included a list of telephone and fax numbers for every Suffolk County Legislator in this issue.

Contract Printing

Once the Legislature approves the Contract and the County Executive signs it into law, the new Contract language is then incorporated into the previous Contract. This process includes a comprehensive proof



AME Treasurer Robert Zielinski explains an important financial point to the Negotiating Team members.

reading where a follow-up agreement is made on the actual written Contract which is now ready for printing. Once this tedious and important process is complete, a new Collective Bargaining Agreement is printed and distributed to our members. The process of contract negotiations is a serious matter, and those on the AME Negotiating Team have thus far worked long and hard to provide the best representation for our entire AME membership. Please remember the importance of confidentiality in this



Pictured from Left to Right: As Kevin Williams, Medicaid Unit takes part in the group discussion, AME Third Vice President Brian Kelly; Robert Zielinski, AME Treasurer; and Frank Casiglia, AME Secretary (All AME Executive Board) discuss issues on the table.

process--and be sure to thank your AME Union brothers and sisters for the work they are doing to benefit us all.

President Cheryl Felice conferring with Helen Wrobel, attorney from O'Dwyer & Bernstein on some very specific bargaining actions.



2010
Save
the
Dates

- Longevity Payments** **Thursday, April 15, 2010**

- Board of Directors' Meeting** **Thursday, May 13, 2010, 1 PM**
(At AME Headquarters)
- Albany Lobby Day** **Tuesday, May 25, 2010**
(Leaving AME @ 5:45 AM and return to Long Island @ 7:30 PM)

- Board of Directors' Meeting** **Thursday, June 10, 2010, 1 PM**
(At AME Headquarters)
- General Membership Meeting** **Tuesday, June 22, 2010, 6 PM**
(At AME Headquarters--Scholarship Awards, AME Longevity Pin Awards)

- Step Increases** **Thursday, July 1, 2010**
- Board of Directors' Meeting** **Thursday, July 8, 2010, 1 PM**
(At AME Headquarters)

- AME Lobsterfest** **Thursday, August 12, 2010, 6 PM**
(At Lands End, Sayville)

- Board of Directors' Meeting** **Thursday, August 19, 2010, 1 PM**
(At AME Headquarters)

- Picnic** **Sunday, September 12, 2010, 11AM-Dusk**
(At Southaven Park)
- Board of Directors' Meeting** **Thursday, September 30, 2010, 1 PM**
(At AME Headquarters)

- General Membership Meeting** **Tuesday, October 26, 2010, 6 PM**
(At AME Headquarters)
- Board of Directors' Meeting** **Thursday, October 28, 2010, 1 PM**
(Tentative Issues Forum for All Delegates)

- Convention (Tentative)** **Mon-Wed, November 8, 9 & 10, 2010**
(To be determined)

- Board of Directors' Meeting** **Monday, December 20, 2010, 1 PM**
(At AME Headquarters)



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